

VZCZCXRO8442
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHJA #3362 3450719
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 110719Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7345
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1740
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1296
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2140
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 003362

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, INR/EAP, DS/IP/EAP,
DS/T/ATA, S/CT, EAP/ANP
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/11/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [ID](#) [AS](#)

SUBJECT: CENTRAL JAVA -- KEYSTONE COPS MISTAKENLY SHOOT AT
AUSTRALIAN CT OFFICIAL

REF: JAKARTA 3273

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b-d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a bizarre incident, an Australian counterterrorism official became the target of gunfire while driving his vehicle in Central Java on November 25. He was not injured. Amid initial fears of a possible terrorist incident or maybe an attempted car-jacking, police now admit that the attack was conducted by counter-narcotics agents who mistakenly thought the vehicle was running drugs. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) SHOOT 'EM UP IN JAVA: A bizarre incident has embarrassed the Indonesian police. Lester Cross, the Australian Director of the Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC) in Semarang, Central Java, was attacked by armed men on November 25 near the city of Solo, Central Java. (Note: Formed after the October 2002 Bali bombing, JCLEC--which is run by Australia in concert with the GOI--instructs Indonesian officials in counterterrorist law enforcement. See reftel.)

¶3. (SBU) Based on what we understand, four armed men on motorcycles chased Cross' vehicle--which is armored--and attempted to stop it. Cross--who is a highly experienced agent of the Australian Federal Police--took counter-measures and continued driving away from the attackers. The attackers then opened fire on his vehicle, shooting a bulletproof window and puncturing one tire. Cross evaded the attack and returned safely to Semarang. Pol/C--during a visit to Semarang--subsequently met Cross who said he was fine, though shaken by the incident.

¶4. (C) VARIOUS WRINKLES: The incident has had various wrinkles. Media reports immediately after the incident claimed that it might have had a terrorist connection, speculating that Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) elements--historically strong in Central Java--might have tried to kill Cross. The initial INP investigation, however, asserted that the attack was an attempted car-jacking. Cross confirmed to Pol/C during a November 30 conversation that he did not think the attack was aimed at him specifically or was related to his position at JCLEC, but was rather criminal in nature.

¶5. (SBU) THE LATEST EXPLANATION: In the latest twist, the

police now say the attack was inadvertent--and they took responsibility for it. On December 7, Central Java Police Chief MG Dodi Sumantyan told the media the incident was a case of mistaken identity and had been carried out by members of a police counter-narcotics unit.

¶6. (SBU) According to Sumantyan, the police had received a tip that a drug dealer carrying drugs in his vehicle would be in an area where Cross happened to be traveling. The police had assumed that Cross was the drug dealer whom they were pursuing. As police had approached the vehicle on motorcycles, Cross had taken defensive measures and had not stopped. Concluding that Cross was trying to elude them, police had opened fire on the vehicle. Cross had escaped the attack and returned to his home.

¶7. (C) WELL, WE'RE SORRY: Privately, Sumantyan contacted Cross and apologized for the mistake. Cross and a team of Australian Federal Police investigators told Pol/C they agree with the INP's assessment that the attack was a case of mistaken identity and entirely unrelated to Cross' position at the JCLEC counterterrorism training facility.

¶8. (C) NO PROBLEMS, MATE: In the end, the incident--which could have had tragic consequences--has not resulted in any problems between the Australians and the Indonesian police. Working relations between the Australians and the Indonesians at JCLEC are excellent and seem set to remain so. Cross--who has shrugged his shoulders at the whole situation--remains at work in Semarang; he rotates out, returning to Australia early next year.

HUME